

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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OIC-04 AGR-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02

H-03 INR-10 INT-08 L-03 LAB-06 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: THE THIRD WORLD - UN

1. FOLLOWING EDITORIAL FROM HONGKONG STANDARD APRIL 19, TITLED
"THE CHALLENGE OF THIRD WORLD": QUOTE

2. ADDRESSING A 135-NATION CONFERENCE ON RAW MATERIALS AT THE
UNITED NATIONS ON TUESDAY, US SECRETARY OF STATE DR. HENRY
KISSINGER WARNED AGAINST THE CREATION AND MULTIPLICITY OF
ECONOMIC BLOCS. MAKING A THINLY DISGUISED REFERENCE TO THE
ORGANISATION FOR PETROLEUM EXPORTING COUNTRIES (OPEC), DR.
KISSINGER TOUGH-TALKED HIS WAY WITH THE WARNING: "THE
ORGANISATION OF ONE GROUP OF COUNTRIES AS A BLOC WILL SOONER
OR LATER PRODUCE THE ORGANISATION OF THE POTENTIAL
VICTIMS INTO A COUNTER BLOC." DR. KISSINGER'S REMARKS
WERE OBVIOUSLY A DIRECT RESPONSE TO A PROPOSAL PUT FORWARD
LAST WEEK BY ALGERIAN PRESIDENT HOUARI BOUMEDIENNE WHO CALLED
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FOR A RAW MATERIALS CARTEL TO PROTECT THE INTERESTS OF THE

THIRD WORLD.

3. ON WEDNESDAY IT WAS THE TURN OF THE OIL PRODUCING COUNTRIES TO PICK UP THE CHALLENGE. ACCUSING THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES OF "IRRESPONSIBLE PRICE POLICIES" BASED ON "UNREALISTICALLY CHEAP ENERGY", THE SAUDI ARABIAN PETROLEUM MINISTER CHARGED THAT IMMEDIATE ECONOMIC AID TO THE DEVELOPING NATIONS WAS THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. BUT IN THIS POWER PLAY OF CHARGES AND COUNTER-CHARGES, WHERE REALLY DOES THE ECONOMIC SALVATION OF THE THIRD WORLD LIE?

4. IF THE ARABS HAVE A POLITICAL JUSTIFICATION TO FORM CARTELS IN ORDER TO EXTRACT BETTER PRICES FOR THEIR OIL; IF THE AMERICANS HAVE AN ECONOMIC JUSTIFICATION TO OCCASIONALLY DUMP THEIR SURPLUS WHEAT INTO THE OCEAN OR TO OFFER INCENTIVES TO PRODUCERS TO GROW LESS IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN HIGH PRICES; WHY SHOULDN'T THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES - IN THE NAME OF LOGIC, REASON AND PURE ECONOMIC SANITY - HAVE A MORAL JUSTIFICATION TO JOIN HANDS IN A FIGHT FOR BETTER COMMODITY PRICES?

5. IN THE WAKE OF THE ENERGY CRISIS - FOLLOWED CLOSELY BY A SPIRALLING GLOBAL INFLATION - THE THIRD WORLD HAS PERHAPS SUFFERED THE WORST. IT WILL TAKE MANY MOONS - AND FUEL-LESS NIGHTS - BEFORE IT MAKES A RECOVERY. WHAT THEN SHOULD IT DO DURING THE INTERIM PERIOD? PERHAPS THE FIRST INSTINCT IS SELF-PRESERVATION. IF A DEVELOPING COUNTRY CANNOT FIGHT ITS ECONOMIC BATTLES SINGLE-FISTED - PARTICULARLY IN A SITUATION WHERE THE ODDS ARE STACKED HEAVILY AGAINST IT - THERE IS AT LEAST ONE ALTERNATIVE: STRENGTH IN NUMBERS.

6. TOWARDS THIS END, AT LEAST THREE MAJOR INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES ESPOUSED THE CAUSE OF THE THIRD WORLD: THE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE IN ALGIERS EARLY THIS YEAR, THE ANNUAL ECAFE CONFERENCE IN COLOMBO LAST MONTH AND THE CURRENT. 135-NATION ASSEMBLY ON RAW MATERIALS AT THE UNITED NATIONS. WILL THE THIRD WORLD EVENTUALLY SUCCEED IN STRENGTHENING ITS HAND AGAINST THE CONGLOMERATES AND THE CIRTELS? UNQUOTE.

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